

*Physical Disabilities  
Through the Lifespan*



# Children With Disabilities

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# *Physical Disabilities Through the Lifespan*



## State of the Field

- Changing epidemiology of disability in children and adolescents
  - Substantial growth of major disabling conditions
  - Dynamic nature of disability in children with disabilities
  - Ethnic diversity
  - Co-morbidity
- Measurement is complex
  - Development, diversity, dependence
  - Habilitation and enhancing development
- Adolescents with disabilities
  - Normalization
  - Transition



## Problems/Concerns/Issues

- Measurement
  - Child vs. family outcomes
  - Disease-specific vs. generic
  - Spectrum from biologic to social
  - Sensitive to developmental changes
- High survival rate
- Addressing the full spectrum of transition
  - Integration vs. special services
- Taxonomy
  - Need for common language
    - Disability, outcomes, compensations (treatment)

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## Research Priorities

- Describing patterns of epidemiology and predictors of remission and persistence
  - Opportunities for primary and secondary prevention
- Tools and measurement
  - Outcomes and functioning (developmentally appropriate)
  - Quality of life
  - Taxonomy of compensatory mechanisms
- Understanding transition
  - Reproductive health, STD's, mental health, self-efficacy, independence
  - Developing a common definition of success
- Trajectories of growth and development among children with disabilities